Dr. James Abbott

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THE LAST THURSDAY OF FEBRUARY.

Bates, Joshua

REVIVALS OF RELIGION IN MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE.

NOVEMBER, 1839.

Rev. Dr. Cogswell,

Dear Sir,—Agreeably to your request, I will endeavor to furnish for the Register a brief history of the *Revivals of Religion* in Middlebury College. You must not, however, expect a very minute statement of facts; especially with regard to those, which occurred more than twenty years ago. The college has existed nearly forty years; and my connection with it comprehends but a little more than half of that period. Concerning the revivals, which took place previously to the year 1818, I must, therefore, depend wholly on the statements and recollections of others. I have, however, endeavored to supply this deficiency, as well as to refresh my own memory in relation to more recent revivals, by collecting the scattered reminiscences of other minds. I have accordingly written to several gentlemen, alumni of the college, who were connected with it, at different periods of its history; and I shall make a free use of their letters, written in answer to my inquiries.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

The foundation of Middlebury College was laid in prayer; and while it has participated largely in the charities of the friends of learning and religion, its prosperity has depended principally on their prayers and the consequent spiritual blessings showered upon it; giving it a distinguished character for piety and holy enterprise. A very large proportion of its graduates have entered the field of missionary and ministerial labor. And not a few of these either received their first abiding religious impressions, or obtained a new impulse in their Christian course, during the period of their college life. The general religious character of the institution, and the frequent seasons of "refreshing from the presence of the Lord," enjoyed within its walls, has given it a distinguished name among the best institutions of New England; and truly it has been highly favored of Heaven. It has been often watered by the dews of divine grace; and annually has it sent forth streams, which have "made glad the city of our God." Besides several periods of partial awakening, temporary seriousness and occasional conversions, it has been blessed with no less than

ten seasons of special and general religious inquiry and spiritual improvement, which may with great propriety be denominated *Revivals of Religion.*

Before I proceed to give the result of my inquiries and recollections on the subject—to state the facts, enumerate the striking incidents, and endeavor to describe the interesting scenes, connected with these revivals; it seems to me proper, to define the term *Revival*, as applied to the subject of religion; and, as far as possible, fix its meaning, so that I may not be misapprehended in my statements.

A *Revival of Religion*, as I shall use the phrase; and, indeed, as I believe it to be generally used in this country, is a state of elevated feeling in view of divine truth, connected with corresponding and vigorous action; and *these* extensively pervading a community. It is a period of serious and even anxious inquiry among impenitent sinners, 'what they shall do to be saved;' and of ardent prayer, deep solicitude and special effort among Christians, to grow in grace, and advance the cause and kingdom of the Redeemer, by rousing the attention of careless sinners, and leading them to seek the Lord and their own eternal salvation. It is a season, when pure and undefiled religion is rapidly increasing, and extending its benign influence—when sinners are flocking to Jesus, 'as doves to their windows;' and saints are 'rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' A revival of religion, therefore, does not consist in a single hopeful conversion, nor in a few instances of serious impression and temporary religious inquiry;—much less in a mere increase of religious meetings, or religious conversation, or religious discussion and excitement; but in a state of general anxiety and deep solicitude on the subject of religion, with corresponding and persevering efforts to obtain an interest in the redemption of Christ, and advance his cause in the world; followed by an increase of personal holiness and many hopeful conversions unto God. It is the result of much faithful preaching of the word and manifestation of the truth, accompanied by ardent, persevering and united prayer. It has therefore, with great propriety, been called "a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord"—of special divine influences—of a copious effusion of the Holy Spirit, and a general diffusion through a community, of the spirit of truth and love, of humility and meekness, of peace, harmony and joy.

Another preliminary remark seems to be necessary to prevent a misapprehension; or, at least, to secure a correct understanding, of some of the statements about to be made. The remark is this, that a very intimate connection with familiar intercourse, has existed between the religious community in the village of Middlebury and the members of college, from its first establishment to the present time. The students have all along boarded in private families. And, while they have not failed to receive weekly religious instruction from the presiding officer, and occasionally from other members of the faculty;—while a weekly conference and prayer meeting, open for all the members of college, who chose to attend, has been constantly maintained on Saturday evening;—while a religious association, denominated the Philadelphian Society, composed of the most devoted members of the several classes of students, who are admitted on examination, and meet for religious worship and mutual religious instruction and admonition every Friday evening, has long existed in the institution, and exerted, in a high degree, the appropriate influence of a well organized church;—while these religious privileges have been enjoyed by the students, they have been permitted and required by the laws of college, to attend the stated public worship of the Sabbath, in the several churches in the village, to which they respectively belonged, or which they or their parents preferred. The consequence of this arrangement has been a strong religious sympathy between the Christians in college and those in the village and its vicinity. Most of the revivals, which commenced in college, have, of course, soon reached the village; and most of those, which originated in the village, have soon diffused their hallowed influence through the college. Without stopping here, to discuss the question, whether this intimate connection has always been mutually beneficial, (concerning which some have doubted, but concerning which I have *no* doubts,) I simply make the statement of the

fact here, as explanatory of some of the circumstances and measures, to which I shall have occasion to refer, on account of their connection with the revivals in college.

First Revival.

Middlebury College, as previously stated, was instituted, and put in operation, in the year 1800. The next year was a year of "the right hand of the Most High," in the village and township of Middlebury; and many of the inhabitants were brought under the influence of divine grace; and led to embrace the offers of mercy, and devote themselves to the service of God. But I find no evidence, that the few members of college were, at all, interested in the work. But in the years 1805 and 1806, Middlebury was again visited in mercy. A revival commenced in September, 1805, and continued through the winter and spring of the year 1806, with little interruption and considerable power. In this work, especially towards its close, the members of college participated, and enjoyed a share of its blessed influences. I am not able, however, to furnish any particular statement concerning its character; as I have failed to obtain letters from those, who were then members of the institution. From other sources I learn simply the general facts, that several students were deeply serious, and reckoned among the converts; and that two or three, who have since done much for their country and the church of God, were among the acknowledged subjects of the work.

Second, Third and Fourth Revivals.

I place the *three* (or, as some distinguish and reckon them, the *four*) revivals, which occurred during the short period between the autumn of 1809 and the summer of 1814, under one head; because they followed each other in quick, and almost continuous succession. This was a period of great interest both in the village and in the college; and through the instrumentality of those, who were then members of the institution, it proved to be of immense importance to the church and the heathen world.—Concerning the latter portion of this period, a graduate of 1814 thus writes:—"The revivals, which occurred during my connection with the college, were much the same as those which are so often witnessed in the towns and villages and colleges of highly favored New England; and which, I trust and hope and pray, are ere long to be witnessed in every region of the globe. The first was in the year 1811. It was a powerful and blessed work of the Holy Spirit of God. This was too manifest, at the time, to be denied even by the most skeptical and hardened of those, who were, and continued to be, unconverted. With many others, who like myself had been living without hope and without God in the world, I experienced, at that time, wholly unsought and unexpected by myself, a great and wonderful change, like that described in Scripture, when '*a man is born again*,' and becomes '*a new creature in Christ Jesus*.' The nature and circumstances of this change were such, as compelled me to believe it could have proceeded from no other source, than the Author of all good. Twenty-eight years have now elapsed; and my conviction is, if possible, still stronger that it was—it *must* have been the work of God's grace, for which many immortal souls will bless his holy name for ever."

Another graduate of the same class, whose residence in Middlebury, as a member of the academy and of the college, embraces the whole period from 1809 to 1814, in answer to my letter of inquiry, thus writes:—"Dear Sir, your inquiry of me, respecting the revivals of religion in Middlebury College, during my residence there, sent my thoughts back to seasons and scenes, which I have often recollected with peculiar interest—with *painful* interest also, as seasons poorly improved to my own spiritual good. For it was not till my junior year, that I became possessed of the Christian hope. The recollections of those seasons, however, which preceded my own supposed conversion, I hope, have proved of some profit to me.

"While I was in the Academy in Middlebury, in the fall and winter of 1809–10, there was a very powerful revival in the town, which was shared in by the college. I recollect the mingling of the students with the inhabitants of the town in the meetings of that revival. Pious students took part in them, and contributed to render them interesting. Unconverted members of the college also attended with them. But the interest, with which Christians in town regarded the cases of awakened members of college, was of peculiar tenderness and strength. I doubt whether there ever has been an instance, in which the feelings of Christian inhabitants of any town toward a college in it, were more like those of a parent, in time of revival, than those of the good people in Middlebury.

"In the years 1811 and 12, if I recollect right," continues my correspondent, "there was another revival in college, connected with one in the town. My recollections of it are, that it was a work of deep solemnity and power; of pungent convictions and deep distress; and of great earnestness, activity, prayerfulness, and anxious wrestling for souls, on the part of the pious students. I can testify, as one then in an unconverted state, that the manner in which Christian students lived, talked, prayed, and addressed sinners in conference meetings, was such as to give emphasis to the text, '*There is no peace to the wicked.*' Every thing was kind; and adapted to win, if possible, upon the feelings of those of us, who were in an unconverted state; and also such, as to make us feel, that they had a deep and overwhelming sense of the solemnity of eternal things; the preciousness of souls; the guilt and danger of the condition of their unconverted fellow students. Fisk and Parsons, since missionaries to the Holy Land, and gone to their reward; and Mr. Ebenezer Weeks, who died that spring, I think; were in the revival, as Christians of some age and experience, in the Christian life; and were active in the revival. Their spirit of devout piety, their fervency, their sound Christian judgment, in counselling and exhorting the unconverted in college were peculiar. I have never seen men, who surpassed them. And so far as human instrumentality is concerned, in giving character to a revival, they had a happy share in that one. I have a very clear and vivid recollection of the meetings held in college, in that revival. There was nothing of bustle and parade; all was still and solemn as eternity. One particular room, used for senior recitations I think, in the old college building, I remember as the scene of some of the meetings; and of which it might have been said—for it was apparently felt—'how dreadful is this place!' It seemed to be felt, that *God was there.* Plain, solemn, and frequently *awful* TRUTH was set forth, in the addresses of the pious students. The excitement produced was entirely that, which came of the clear and faithful setting forth of Bible truth, accompanied by the Holy Spirit."

It is added in the same letter: "There was one interesting fact in relation to the missionary Parsons, in that revival. He came to college hopefully pious; and devotedly so, apparently; and one of the last men, who would have been thought to have occasion for questioning his own piety. In that revival he passed through a course of religious exercises, very much like those of an awakened, convicted and inquiring sinner;—gave up, for a time, his hope; and, though there was no contest with God, such as is often seen in awakened sinners, yet he manifested a most deep and distressing sense of sin, of the justice of God and his need of the prayers of Christians. If any thing could make a sinner feel 'what then must *I* be! what must become of *my* soul!' it was to see Parsons in this state of mind respecting himself. He soon, however, became possessed of the same firm and happy hope, as before;—and it was probably only a season of the testing and shaking of his first hope, preparatory to the refining of his Christian character, and the more firm and settled enjoyment of religion."

In accordance with the reminiscences of my esteemed correspondent, I find in the biography of Parsons, an extract from his private diary, bearing the date of November 22, 1811; in which he records his feelings during this period of trial and doubting, and of confirmation and rejoicing in hope. As he afterward exhibited so elevated a Christian character, and was called to act so conspicuous

a part, as a pioneer in a new missionary field, I cannot forbear to transcribe a portion of that interesting history of *deep* experience; hoping, that it may afford instruction to others, who may fall "under the hidings of God's face," or whom he may be preparing, by severe discipline, for some lofty enterprise:—"The revival of religion in this college commenced about the beginning of September. For several months previously to this blessed work, my mind was in darkness, and at times in much distress. I was often convinced, that my hope was only the hope of the hypocrite; and that, notwithstanding the public profession I had made of my faith in the Redeemer, I should at last come short of eternal life. My reasons for this conclusion were the following; my hope did not afford consolation; prayer was not refreshing and spiritual; religious conversation was no more interesting, than conversation upon things of the world. If I am a child of God, why is it thus with me? During all this time, I believe, the Spirit of God was striving with me, and preparing me for a more thorough knowledge of my own heart. When the revival commenced, I said, now this question must be decided. I cannot live in this state of anxious uncertainty. I must have more evidence of piety, or live without hope."—After relating his conversations with pious friends and alluding to their prayers and sympathies for him, he adds:—"During the two succeeding weeks, I walked in thick darkness; surely it was the darkness of the shadow of death. I read the promises to the penitent; but could not apply them to myself. There was nothing in the Bible to heal my wounded spirit. How readily would I have given the world, were it in my possession, for that peace which God giveth to his children."—After recording again the effect of conversation and exhortation on his mind, he proceeds:—"In this situation I continued until Sabbath morning, November 11th—a morning, which I shall ever remember as the happiest of my life. After prayers in the chapel, I took my Bible, and retired to a grove west of the college. I recollect distinctly the impression on my mind, while I walked to the grove, that it was the last attempt; 'if unsuccessful now, I can do no more.' This passage of Scripture was fixed in my mind, 'O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself.' My past abused privileges, my unholy prayers, my opposition to a holy God, were set in array before me; and I saw the wickedness of my whole life, as clearly as I saw the sun which shone upon me. I believe, I had no doubt, that I was a vessel of wrath, fitted for destruction. Wearied and distressed, I sat down upon a log, and contemplated the miseries of hell. My thoughts were thus; 'Your doom is now certain; you did hope for heaven, but you will hope no more. Your sentence is just. O miserable hell! God commands you to repent; but your heart is too hard, it will not relent.' At this moment, I was directed to Jesus, as an all-sufficient Saviour. Then my heart acquiesced in his atonement, and in his dealings with such a vile sinner, as I saw myself to be; and my soul reposed itself on the arm of everlasting love. I felt the chain break. O, it was the bondage of sin! I opened the Bible, and read these words; 'For this cause I bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' It will never be in my power to give an adequate description of my feelings in view of this passage. There was a beauty, majesty and sweetness in it, which are indescribable. I dwelt upon it, until my heart was in a flame of love. Jesus revealed himself in his glory. . . . . To him I dedicate my life, my talents, my all; desiring to be devoted to him, while I remain in the flesh; and to be accepted of him, when I pass the valley of the shadow of death. To God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, for ever, Amen."—In view of this record of experience, the biographer of Mr. Parsons makes the following statement and remark:—"During the period under consideration, Mr. Parsons supposed that he had ever before been a stranger to vital godliness. But on farther examination of his heart and more mature reflection, he was on the whole rather inclined to think otherwise. Whether he was, or was not, a true believer before, this was eminently a new era in his Christian life; and he now received an impulse in religion, which he never lost."

With regard to the revival of 1814, I have referred to the same source of

information; and find in Mr. Parsons' diary, under date of May 30, 1814, the following minute:—"Prayer meeting in my room; delightful season; sinners tremble, saints rejoice. God is present of a truth. A few begiu to hope."—As furnishing the hest description of the character and extent of this work, I quote from a letter, written June 24, hy the same devoted servant of Christ to the Rev. Moses Hallock of Plainfield, Ms.:—"The present is a solemn period. God is pleased in his mysterious providence, to visit this seminary again by the effusions of his Holy Spirit. The work commenced about four weeks since. Four young gentlemen of promising talents, who had heen long regardless of God and their own salvation, are now proclaiming their Maker's praises. Thousands may he brought to glory through the instrumentality of these young disciples; perhaps, many perishing heathen. . . . . Some of those very individuals, who were most active in wickedness, now cry for mercy. God has smiled upon the institution in a peculiar manner. This is the *fourth* revival, that I have witnessed here. In the senior class, twenty-five are hopefully pious; in the freshman, all but four. "Not unto us, O Lord; not unto us; but unto thy name he all the glory.'"

The numher of new converts in these three (or if, with Mr. Parsons, we consider that of 1811 and 1812 as two distinct works, in these four) revivals cannot now be very accurately ascertained. They seem all to have heen solemn and interesting works; and two of them, at least, very powerful in their operation and happy in their results.

Fifth Revival.

In the year 1816, there was an extensive revival in the college, as well as iu the village. It commenced in June or July; and during the month of August was very powerful. Dr. Merrill, the pastor of the Congregational church, in a brief account of this revival, says: "During a single week in the month of August, probahly *fifty* attained to the liberty wherewith Christ maketh free." He adds: "The college shared largely in this work of grace."

From a letter of a graduate of 1817, I make the following extract: "The revival, which occurred in the summer of 1816, was one which I shall have occasion to remember, with devout gratitude to God, throughout eternity; for it was then, that my atteution was arrested by the Holy Spirit, to attend to the things of another world. The work, I should think, was somewhat gradual in its progress; commencing in the village, and extending to the college. I remember that, for some time previous to any special interest being manifest in the college, individual memhers of the college, who used to attend religious meetings in the village, spoke of those meetings, as being increasingly interesting."

"How many students of the college becamè the suhjects of that work, I have no means of ascertaining. There werc several in the class to which I belonged. Those members of the institution, who had previously been consistently and devotedly pious, were very useful in that season of God's gracious visitation. The Rev. Joseph Brown, who, when chaplain of the Seaman's Friend Society, died a few years since in New York; and the Rev. Hiram Bingham, now a missionary at the Sandwich Islands, were among the most useful. Their word was with power; for their previous life had been consistent. I mention this fact, to show that a dcvotedly *pious* young man iu a literary institution may do very much good.

"There were several memhers of the college, belonging to different classes, who for some months previous to that revival, had heen accustomed to meet at each other's rooms, for the purpose of drinking and carousing till a late hour of the night, and who were on the horders of ruin, that were rescued from that ruin by that blessed revival in college. . . . . The whole work, I should think, was characterised by stillness, and the deep searching operations of the Holy Ghost."

To this statement of one, who was a witness of the whole scene, I add only, that it corresponds with the general accounts of this work, given by others. It

must, I think, have been one of the most interesting revivals, with which the institution was ever blessed.

Sixth Revival.

Though there was a partial revival, in one portion of the township of Middlebury, in the year 1819, it did not reach the college, and no special interest among the students after the revival of 1816, was manifest till the year 1821. Of course the class of 1820 passed through the four years of their college life, without receiving that blessing, which had been the portion, it was said, of every preceding class.—The revival of 1821, though not confined to the college, had its origin there; and there shed much of its heavenly influence. I very well remember the circumstances of its commencement. During the early part of the spring term, it was perceived, that there was among the Christians in the institution some solicitude, to obtain the blessing, which had so often been granted in answer to prayer. This solicitude manifested itself with peculiar strength among the professors of religion in the senior class. They began to fear, that their class, like the one which preceded them, would go forth unblest; and their unconverted classmates be sent into a world full of snares and temptations, without the guidance of heavenly wisdom; and be left to exert an unholy influence, and 'treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath.' They began to attend, what were then called union prayer meetings in the village. Prayer meetings in college too, especially on Sabbath morning, were better attended than usual; and an increased attention was paid to preaching in the sanctuary; to the expositions of Scripture in the chapel; and to exhortations in the Saturday evening conference.—The first marked indication of an approaching revival—which was, indeed, a very manifest proof of the presence of that Spirit, whose office it is to convince of sin—occurred one evening, about the middle of the term. A member of the senior class, distinguished as a scholar, and known as a regular, and, in the common acceptation of the term, a *moral* young man, who had for several days exhibited a solemn countenance, suddenly became alarmed at his danger, and overwhelmed by a sense of his guilt, as a transgressor of the holy law of God. Some of his classmates immediately assembled, and prayed for him and with him. His convictions, however, continued to increase in intensity; till they rose to a state of agony, and called forth the strongest expressions of self-loathing and despair. About two o'clock at night, I was called from my bed to visit him, and pray with him. Indeed, we could do nothing but pray; for his mind was too much agitated, to allow him to listen to exhortation or instruction. I was obliged to leave him toward morning, still under the agonies of an awakened conscience. In this state, or nearly in this state, he remained for several days. In the meantime, the impression made upon the members of the institution was powerful and universal;—all seemed to feel, at least, a sympathetic influence—all appeared solemn as death. Nor was this feeling, in every case, mere sympathy. Within a week, it was found that many of the impenitent students were under deep conviction of sin, and were anxiously inquiring, 'what they should do to be saved.' Still there were no conversions manifest—no hopes expressed. The scene became alarming. There was evidently a want of spiritual strength in our Zion, that these might be 'born again'—a want of fervent, united, and persevering prayer. Accordingly personal application was made to several individuals in the village, with a request that they would not cease to pray for these young men, who were ready to perish. It was not long before a spirit of prayer and supplication seemed to be poured out upon the surrounding Christian community; and those sinners, who had been for several days under conviction in college, began one after another to repent and rejoice in hope. From this time the revival spread with great rapidity, both in the college and in the village.—Still the young man, who was first awakened, and who seemed to be instrumental of calling up the attention of others to the subject of religion, 'found no place for repentance' and no peace to his soul. His mind seemed to have lost its wonted elasticity and

energy; and he remained through the term, and for a considerable portion of the summer term, in a state of settled gloom. He seemed, indeed, to human view, to be past recovery—pining away in utter despair. He viewed himself as a reprobate—forsaken of God—doomed to certain and everlasting destruction. All considerations drawn from the attributes of God, the analogies of providence and grace, and the provisions and promises of the gospel, were equally unavailing to convince his understanding, or soften his heart. Thus he continued to pervert the Scriptures, resist the Spirit, and reject the counsels of wisdom and the offers of mercy. Till at length, a friend alarmed by his description of his gloomy, and as he thought malignant feelings; and apprehending, that he had committed the unpardonable sin, plainly told him so, took sides with him in the argument against himself, and joined with him in the conclusion, that there was no hope for him; and consequently declined any longer to converse with him, or pray for him. This circumstance seems to have been the occasion of breaking the chain, by which Satan had so long bound him. And after having remained more than three months in this morbid, melancholy state, he began, this very day, to pray for himself, and rejoice in hope. He finally became an ornament and blessing to the church; and an able and faithful preacher of the gospel.

To illustrate the sovereignty of God in his dealings with sinners; and show, how often he leads them by a way that they knew not; and how unable we are, without the guidance of his Spirit, to fix on the wisest expedients, prescribe the best modes, and choose the best measures of employing the means of grace;—indeed, to show the inefficiency of *all* means and measures, without a divine interposition, and the sufficiency of *any* of them, with his blessing, I will briefly state another singular and interesting case of conversion, which occurred in this revival—a case, forming a perfect contrast with that just described.—A member of the same class, a youth of amiable but rather volatile character, was called away by his father, some time before the close of the spring term, to take a long journey. He did not return, if I remember correctly, till more than a week of the summer term had elapsed. Indeed, I have a strong impression, that he came into town on Friday of the second week. He came, as far as could be perceived, careless and volatile as ever. But before the succeeding Sabbath, his mind was deeply impressed with a sense of sin and a view of his lost and perishing condition. So powerful were his convictions, not of danger, but of guilt, as he afterward informed me, that he could scarcely conceal his agitations during the hours of public worship, or fix his attention on the preached word. He said nothing, however, to any person; and, as far as possible, suppressed his feelings, till evening; when he retired alone to his room, locked the door, and knelt down to pray. How long he continued in this posture, he was never enabled to state. He remained, however, till he found access to the mercy-seat, and began to rejoice in God, with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.' So great was his ecstacy, that for a time he lost all self-command. His fellow students, who heard his acclamations of joy, and came to his door, could not gain his attention; but were obliged to force the door open, in order to gain admittance. In this state of rapture and nervous excitement, he remained through the night, praising God, and ascribing glory to his name. Indeed, when I first saw him, at ten o'clock the next day, tears and smiles were mingled on his countenance; and so strong were his emotions, that he could neither stand nor sit with composure, or scarcely speak with calmness and distinct articulation. He, however, soon became calm and serene—established in faith and confirmed in 'holy living.' And he finally went forth to preach the gospel; and has been a very devoted, acceptable, and successful minister of Jesus Christ.

Now, Dear Sir, if you ask me, what I think of these two extraordinary cases of conversion; I can only answer; my theory is, that the peculiarities in them were partly the result of natural temperament and previous character, and partly the design of Sovereign Wisdom, and the operations of that Spirit, which is 'like the wind, blowing where it listeth:' or rather, perhaps, I should say, that the Holy Spirit, applying the truth to different minds, produces these

and other different results; and thus abases the pride of human reason, and exposes the vanity of human calculations; demonstrating the truth of the inspired declaration: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." There was surely no religion in the awful convictions and morbid melancholy of the former case, nor in the nervous agitations and loud acclamations of the latter; but were they not both connected with those deep and strong emotions, which resulted from the powerful operations of the Holy Spirit, in his different offices; applying the law and convincing of sin, and showing the things of Jesus Christ and comforting the heart—leading by different methods to the conversion of these precious souls; and calling these chosen vessels of mercy, with an 'effectual calling,' to the work of the ministry?

During this revival, which brought many into the kingdom of grace; and strengthened and confirmed, in the faith, many, who were previously professors of religion, there was great union of sentiment and harmony of action among the officers and pious students. All seemed willing to stand in their lot, and do what they could to win souls to Christ. The stated classical exercises were continued, with little interruption, and generally attended with punctuality and due preparation. No special and peculiar expedients were employed to produce excitement or make impression. Indeed, there was no occasion for exhibiting 'the terrors of the law.' Our business was to *preach Christ*—to present the calls and promises of the gospel—to bring the balm of Gilead, and apply it to the wounded spirit—to soothe and calm and lead the inquiring sinner to Him, who alone is able to save. The commandment had already come. The Spirit seemed to have done his office work of conviction; and was needed principally, as a Comforter and Sanctifier. In addition to the regular worship of the sanctuary—the stated exercises of the chapel—the Sabbath morning expositions of Scripture, and prayer meetings—the weekly conference on Saturday evening, with the religious exercises of the Philadelphian Society on Friday evening; there were occasional class prayer meetings, and daily visiting from room to room, for private conversation and prayer by the college officers and a few devoted students. In these labors of love, I believe all the instructors took a part. There was, however, one tutor, who acted the part of a college missionary; and his unwearied labors in visiting, exhorting, instructing and praying were highly acceptable, and not without marked success and much benefit, both to those who were under conviction, and to those who were rejoicing in hope.

Notwithstanding the length of the account, already given of this revival, I cannot forbear to add a few extracts from two or three letters just received. The first is from a member of the class of 1822:—"I cannot," he remarks, "without more time for reflection, than I am able now to command, recall many facts, which will be of essential service to you; though the revival, which occurred while I was a member of college, was a season of deep interest to me; having been, as I trust, the time when my own heart became interested in religion; and though many scenes, which I was then permitted to witness, I shall ever remember with thrilling emotions; and, I hope, with heartfelt gratitude. . . . . A few of the impenitent, who remained at college, during the spring vacation, were numbered as subjects of the work, before we reassembled for the summer term. When we came together a general solemnity pervaded college. Some, who had been wont to mingle with their fellows in scenes of merriment, if not of impiety, met them on their return, with the language of fraternal reproof and warning; entreating them to become reconciled to God, and welcoming them to new society and new enjoyments. Religion soon became the absorbing subject of thought and conversation. Though opposition lurked in every unregenerate heart; and in some cases assumed the attitude of defiance, she did not, so far as I recollect, presume to vent her spite, in any gross violations of decorum. The leader of several profane and unprincipled associates, who boastingly styled themselves 'Satan's invincibles,' was early smitten with an arrow from the Spirit's quiver; and, after a struggle of several days, became hopefully 'willing in the day of God's

power,' and penitently acknowledged, that human depravity, however determined, must yield in a conflict with sovereign grace.—A considerable proportion of the subjects of this work were from the most thoughtless and irreligious members of college. . . . . The precise number of hopeful conversions, in this revival, I am unable to name; but as, after the lapse of nearly twenty years, I look abroad upon the field of Christian effort, I see several laborers employed,

> ———'Whose doctrine and whose life
> Coincident, exhibit lucid proof,
> That they are honest in the sacred cause,'

and zealous too; whose energies were, at this time, first consecrated to the service of God; and whose tongues were now first employed in his praise. . . . . The only characteristic of this revival, which my time will allow me to mention, is that the instructions given the students, publicly and privately, were plain and pungent, drawn directly from the Bible; and were designed to produce deep penitence, and to lead to the performance of duty."

From a letter of a graduate of 1824; of which I should have made more use in this narrative, had it been received sooner, I extract a single paragraph; because it corresponds with my observations and belief. After referring to the labors of the faculty and other means used in this revival, he observes: "I might add, that there was at that time, and I trust still is, a stated precious female prayer meeting in the village, where the mothers and daughters in Israel met together to pour out their hearts in prayer before God in behalf of Zion; and the college usually shared largely in their petitions to the throne of grace. My extensive acquaintance with those, who attended that meeting, the interest they manifested concerning it, and the account of its character and exercises, received from them, led me to put more confidence in the efficacy of that prayer meeting, than in almost any other means that were used."

The extracts, which follow, are from a letter, already quoted, of a graduate, who, at the time of this revival, held the office of tutor in the college: "The revival of 1821," he observes, "had some very marked features. Previous to the descent of the Spirit, there had been a declension among the professed disciples of Christ in college. A few continued faithful; but the most 'slumbered and slept.' 'At midnight there was a cry made; Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.' This was almost literally fulfilled in those deeply thrilling scenes, which occurred in the night, connected with the case of M——. He was the ornament and the pride of his class. Zealously and ambitiously devoted to his studies, he had neglected 'the great salvation.' When, therefore, on that long to be remembered night, they saw and heard him begging for mercy with such intense earnestness;—O, how many hearts were then smitten and wounded, to be healed only by the blood of Christ. Several students, belonging to the different classes in college, who have since been successfully preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, were then aroused to attend to the things which belonged to their everlasting peace."

"There is no doubt, in my mind, that in that scene, there was much animal feeling and excitement, both on the part of the professors of religion, and on the part of the impenitent. Nor, on the other hand, have I a single doubt, that there was much of the Spirit's operations. Eighteen years have since rolled away; and numbers, who were then awakened, still continue to love the Lord Jesus, and to labor in his service." . . . . . "That season of revival in college has been the means, already, of bringing hundreds, if not thousands, into the church of Christ. . . . . As in the previous outpouring of the Spirit, so in this, some of the professors of religion in college, were greatly useful by their prayers and by their godly conversation. The accounts which were given of that revival, both by letter and by the students themselves, in their subsequent vacation, were the means of great good in several places."

"When I reflect on the scenes of that revival, and on the events which have since occurred, connected with it and consequent upon it, I cannot help exclaiming; 'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem;'—pray for the colleges throughout

the length and breadth of the land;—pray for all our literary institutions, that the Spirit may sanctify the hearts of the many thousands, who are now in a course of literary training for future public life."

Seventh Revival.

In October, 1825, a powerful and interesting revival commenced, both in the village and the college. I cannot better describe the work, as it existed in the latter, than by transcribing a letter recently received from a beloved pupil, who was then a member of the institution and an early subject of that work of grace:—"Your letter," he observes, "requesting some reminiscences of the revival of 1825–6 in Middlebury College, has awakened many recollections of the most interesting description in my mind. And, although I am too much hurried, and exhausted both in body and mind to give you a clear and well digested statement; I shall be glad, if I can discharge even a small part of the debt I owe to your paternal care, and to the institution where, if I am not wholly deceived, I first began *to live*. For what is the life of an irreligious young man, wasting his time, and neglecting his advantages?—The vacation following the commencement of 1825 was marked by a degree of folly and even vice on the part of some few of the students, who remained in town. Soon after the term began, the pious students made a special effort to promote religious feeling among themselves. In particular, a lecture read, according to custom, before the Philadelphian Society, by one of the members, on the sin of Achan, produced a strong feeling in many minds. One young man in particular, since dead, whose religious character had stood as high, at least in the estimation of the irreligious students, as the average among professors of religion, was deeply impressed in view of his spiritual deficiencies, and almost driven to despair. He left the meeting in deep horror of mind, feeling that he should not live till morning; and made his way directly to a room, where several of the students were engaged in mirthful amusement. He entered with a haggard face, and kneeling down besought God and them to forgive him for the evil example he had set them; adding, that as for himself he was a lost man, and should be in perdition before the next morning light. A friend entered, and with some difficulty drew him away. But the assembly was broken up; and the next circle which met in that room, was a *praying* circle, composed principally of the same young men. I am not, however, able to say, to what extent this occurrence was the direct cause of awakening.—The work soon became general, both among Christians and others. In a short time nearly the whole college attended the religious meetings. Almost without exception, those who took this step, became deeply impressed; and at one time there were not more than three or four, who could be said to be wholly indifferent. The scene was now one of deep interest. So universal was the interest, that no false shame led to any concealment of impressions or of religious exercises; and the voice of prayer might be heard, at different times in the day and evening, from the rooms, by one passing through the college halls. Even the groves and fields were not always silent; and while one occupant of a room was using it as a place of prayer; the other might be heard, under the cover of night, unconsciously revealing, by an audible and impassioned utterance, the place of his out-door supplications.—During this whole time there was little, if any, interruption of the regular college exercises; the faculty wisely judging, that as religion is a thing for the whole life, it was best to have its first exercises, as its succeeding ones *must* be, interwoven with the ordinary duties of life. . . . . As to the number of those who became permanently interested in religion, you have doubtless better means of information. From the circumstances in which I was placed, my attention was chiefly occupied by my own case, and that of a few others, with whom I was intimately acquainted. I have a strong impression, however, that the revival was hardly less marked in its influence upon those, who were already hopefully pious, than upon the impenitent portion of the students. The standard of religious feeling must, I think, have been greatly changed."

The young man, whose case is particularly described in this letter, was a graduate of 1826; and, as he is not now living, I do not deem it improper to record his name. *Edmund Chamberlain* was a member of a Baptist church, in the northern part of this State. He was a respectable scholar and an amiable young man; and, as far as was known to the faculty, his deportment did not dishonor his profession. But it seems his own conscience, enlightened and quickened by the Spirit of God, led him to a different decision in his own case. Under the awakening influence of the lecture of a classmate, on the sin of Achan, applied, it would seem, by the Holy Spirit, he was convinced of sin, as a backslider. God saw fit to keep him, for several weeks, in darkness, under the horrors of despair; and thus to use him, as an instrument of awakening and warning to others. Many were thus awakened; and some of them found peace in believing, long before the dark cloud was withdrawn from his mind, and the joys of salvation restored to his soul. The day of his deliverance, however, came; and he lived to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour; and finally died, as I have understood, in peace and hope.

From a letter of a member of the class of 1829, of course a freshman at the time of this revival, I make the following extract: "I remember the seriousness commenced with pious students; and was effected through the instrumentality of a lecture from brother M——, read to the Philadelphian Society, at their first meeting in the fall term, on the removal of the accursed thing from Israel, (the case of Achan,) which greatly shook the hopes of professors of religion."—After alluding to the striking case of Chamberlain, the writer adds: "I recognize some burning and shining lights, in the ministry, who were the fruits of that work. Those who remained steadfast were mostly in the advanced classes. I remember several of my own class, who professed hopes; but whose subsequent lives did no honor to their profession."

The last remark in this extract leads me to add, as the result of my observation, not only in this revival, but in all the revivals in college, which I have been permitted to see, that the best and most advanced scholars, who were hopefully converted, generally continued steadfast in the faith; while more feeble-minded and indolent students often apostatized. Indeed, I can scarcely recollect an instance of apostacy in a member of a senior class, of respectable scholarship, or of any class, in a scholar of vigorous and well disciplined mind; while many instances occur to my recollection, of young men, in the lower classes, of indolent habits and unfurnished and feeble intellects, who were awakened and seemed to be converted, who nevertheless soon fell away and disappointed the hopes of their friends. I add, there can be no such thing as an *idle Christian;* the union of the terms constitutes a solecism in language, and involves an absurdity in idea. Facts might be adduced to show, that an indolent and negligent student, if truly converted, must become active and industrious—'diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;' and that all pretended conversions, where habits of idleness continue, will prove spurious, and end in apostacy.

In this connection, I make a farther quotation from the letter, from which a long extract has already been given, under this head. The writer adds to what he had stated concerning the extensive and blessed influence of the revival: "One other fact occurs to me. It is a painful one; and I should avoid mentioning it, were it not for the probability that it may be a useful warning to those, who are surrounded by similar scenes. It is this; I have never heard of the subsequent awakening and conversion of any one of those, who passed that revival without giving their hearts to God. They have all, so far as I know, gone on in the way they then chose."—This remark is in accordance with a general fact. Very few, who continue impenitent, and without religion, force themselves through a four years' course, in a college often visited by the special influences of the Spirit of God, ever after become deeply interested in the subject. There are, indeed, some striking exceptions; but they are mere exceptions to a general rule. Only *twenty-four* of all, who have thus passed through this college, since my connection with it, are known to me (and I have followed them with a parental eye and inquired after them with parental

solicitude) to have subsequently obtained Christian hopes and made a credible Christian profession. It is therefore generally true, that those, who pass through powerful revivals in college, without submitting to God, and consecrating themselves to his service, become peculiarly hardened and careless; and there is little hope of their subsequent conversion to God.

To the foregoing statements and remarks, I have only to add, that the same means and measures, which were used in the preceding revival of 1821, were employed in this; and that the students, as heretofore, received great benefit from attending public worship in the village; and in turn exerted a happy influence by uniting with the inhabitants of the village, in social prayer meetings and religious conference.

Eighth Revival.

After the revival of 1825–6 had subsided, there succeeded, in college, a state of order and regularity, corresponding with the apostolic description of primitive Christianity: "Then had the churches rest and were edified." And though there were some short periods of increased religious attention and effort among professors in college, with a case or two of seriousness and anxiety among the impenitent, I do not recollect that, for four years, there was any season of general anxiety and inquiry, which corresponds with the definition of a revival of religion, given at the commencement of this communication. But in the spring of 1831, both the village and the college were blessed with a revival of great extent and mighty power. It commenced in the village. Indeed, though the Congregational church had, for some time before, been in a reviving state, there was no appearance of increased attention to religion in college; till a protracted meeting was held in the village, denominated at the time a '*Four Days' Meeting*,' from the length of time devoted continuously to religious exercises and public worship. After much prayer and consultation, the church resolved to hold such a meeting, early in the month of April. The clerical members of the college faculty, as well as other ministers from towns in the vicinity, assisted the pastor of the church, and took an active part in the exercises. The effects of the meeting were exceedingly happy, reaching the whole town, and exerting a powerful and delightful influence on the college.—Similar meetings, it will be remembered, and with similar effects, were held, during that year, in various parts of the country. Their utility consisted principally in their tendency to excite attention in the careless; to increase the fervency, union and perseverance of prayer among Christians; and to afford to ministers repeated opportunities and new facilities, for presenting divine truth to the mind, while in a susceptible state. The expediency of holding such meetings, and especially of repeating them in the same place, was doubted by some; but admitted, I believe, by all judicious ministers, to depend on the circumstances of time, place and previous preparation. My own views on the subject were expressed at large, in a series of essays published in the Vermont Chronicle, the same spring, over the signature of *Presbuteros*. These views have not been essentially changed by subsequent experience and observation. Indeed, the remarks there made, on the necessity of preparation for them, the danger of frequently repeating them, and their liability to abuse and perversion, have been abundantly illustrated and confirmed; and the cautions, there given, have, in my apprehension, acquired increased importance.—This meeting in Middlebury, however, was called under such circumstances, and so judiciously conducted, as to produce none but the happiest effects. The college, as I said, felt its influence. The Spirit seemed to be poured upon nearly all the students simultaneously.—Though no college exercises, if I rightly remember, were omitted, except three in the afternoons of the three first days of the meeting; yet scarcely an individual in the institution, failed to be brought under the influence of the truth and the Spirit of God. All seemed to be more or less solemnly impressed. With some, indeed, these impressions did not prove abiding and sanctifying. Their solemnity subsided; their convictions wore away; and they returned to their vanities—to 'the beggarly elements of the

world.' But with many, these impressions were deep; and resulted in their hopeful conversion. Some of the subsequent meetings in college were peculiarly solemn and interesting. The senior class, which I often met, not only in the regular course of instruction, but for prayer and religious conference, were delightfully zealous and persevering in their efforts to persuade all to come to Christ, and to help one another forward in their Christian course. In the result all the members of the class were hopefully converted, except *one*; and I shall never forget the tenderness with which he was besought, and the fervency with which prayers were offered for him; while he stood alone, sometimes trembling, like an aspen leaf; but still obstinately, and as we have reason to apprehend, *fatally* resisting, unto the end!

From a letter, addressed to me by a member of the class of 1832, who was a subject of this revival, and whose case is described in the letter itself, I make the following extracts: "Six in my class have given evidence of having been converted at that time." . . . . . "There were seasons in the revival, in which a solemn and deep impression seemed to be universal among the students. And probably the judgment-day will establish the fact, that not one individual passed those days of indescribable interest entirely destitute of the strivings of the Holy Spirit." . . . . "There were some cases of a peculiar character. One member of my class, took up the subject of religion, with the greatest deliberation, and began to read his Bible, and to *think;* and thus were his convictions of sin, and his apprehensions of the value of an interest in Christ, gradually strengthened, until he was led to a decision, from which he has never seemed desirous to swerve. . . . . He now preaches the gospel." . . . . . "Another young man was visited frequently by Christian friends; and often felt deeply impressed. He, however, succeeded in resisting the influences of the Spirit; till one evening, when a lecture was preached in the chapel from these words, in Jer. iv. 5: '*Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth.*' Here he felt that he must make a decision. His heart, however, was passionately set upon the legal profession. He thought, 'I must surely be a minister, if I become a Christian now. I will postpone the decision, until I am established in business, and in the first revival I then witness, I will give my attention to the subject.' With this conclusion he for a few moments felt satisfied. But as he was leaving the chapel, a young Christian friend [a beneficiary of the American Education Society] took him by the arm. It was a beautiful evening; and they walked together; they conversed; they wept. At length this young man took back his decision to procrastinate; and leaning on the shoulder of his young friend, said: 'If religion is for me, I will now have it.' The next day he was rejoicing in hope. . . . . He is now in the ministry; and has been permitted to see many coming to Christ."

After mentioning a third interesting case of conversion, the description of which I am obliged to omit, the writer of the letter adds: "Among the means used in this revival, and blessed by the Head of the church, may be mentioned prominently, *personal, private conversation* and *prayer*. And O! could the friends of the American Education Society see how highly instrumental of good were some of the beneficiaries of that Society in the revival of 1831, they would be more strongly encouraged to the exercise of faith and vigorous action in that benevolent cause."

Ninth and Tenth Revivals.

I place these two revivals together; because they resembled each other in character; occurred under similar circumstances; and were very near each other, in point of time. The former occurred in the spring of 1834, and the latter in the autumn of 1835. Both were promoted by the influence of *protracted meetings* in the village; and in both much less was done, than in preceding revivals, by special meetings and peculiar efforts in the institution itself. That of 1834 commenced early in the season. Two young men who remained in town during the winter vacation, became serious and obtained hopes before the commencement of the spring term. Simultaneously a spirit of solicitude

and inquiry appeared in the village; and the Congregational church resolved to hold another *four days' meeting*. Again in the autumn of 1835, under similar circumstances, with much preparation and anxious solicitude, another protracted meeting, of longer continuance, was held in the village. Both these meetings were attended with a blessing; produced salutary effects upon the village and vicinity; and brought a large accession of members to the church. But although, in both instances, there were revivals in the college, peculiar circumstances produced discouragement and weakened the hands of Christians; so that these meetings exerted a far less favorable influence on the students, than was produced by that of 1831. The number, however, that became interested in the subject of religion, professed submission to God, and united with the church, during each of these revivals, was not small; and many of those young men, who then gave their hearts to Christ and consecrated to him their talents, are now engaged in theological studies, and preparing to enter, as efficient laborers, into his vineyard.

In the spring of 1835, there was, for a short time, an increased attention to the subject of religion, among a portion of the students. Many extra prayer meetings were held by them; and at their request, for several evenings in succession, lectures were preached in the chapel. But, though some good was unquestionably done, and a favorable influence exerted on the minds of some individuals, these special efforts did not result in a revival. There was, I fear, a want of humility and faith, both in the students and in the officers.—During a part of the spring term of the last college year, again, some of the pious students seemed to be anxious to do something for the promotion of the cause of religion and the salvation of their unbelieving and impenitent fellow students. But their efforts were feeble; and their prayers were not heard. The institution remained, and still remains, like Gideon's fleece, upon which the dews of heaven fell not. Indeed, I have seen many such feeble and temporary efforts made, without success, both in college and in other Christian communities; and I have learned, that it is in accordance with the economy of God, to try the faith and patience of his people, before he grants his blessing—to show them their weakness, before he puts forth his mighty arm for their deliverance. Truly, *they* must use the means of his appointment; but *He* must have the glory; and he will not bless their efforts, till they feel their dependence and unworthiness, and are thus prepared to go forth to their work in his name, and ascribe unto him all the glory.

Closing Remarks.

In view of the preceding statements and descriptions, I have a few general remarks to make on the influence of revivals in a college, and the best mode of conducting them; and on the bearing and importance of such revivals to the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world, as well as to the preservation of our civil institutions and the prosperity of our beloved country.

1. I remark, then, that the time of a revival, in a college, is a time of deep solicitude and great responsibility with the officers and instructors; requiring watchfulness and prayer, and imposing upon them peculiar duties and unceasing labors. If they are pious men, (and surely this should be the character of all permanent officers in a literary institution,) they cannot but feel a deep interest in the welfare of the youth committed to their charge; and they must know, that the temporal interests and eternal salvation of their pupils may depend on the manner in which they are treated and led to conduct, during these precious seasons—"these sealing times." They know too, that inexperienced young men do not generally feel the importance of order to the discipline and improvement of the mind, nor consider its bearing on the formation of religious character even. As religion, in a time of revival, becomes the engrossing subject of conversation and thought, such young men are peculiarly liable to err in judgment; and, if not restrained, become irregular in their attendance on classsical exercises. Both those, who highly enjoy the consolations and

hopes of the gospel; and those, who are anxious to obtain "the great salvation," are in danger of relaxing their industry, and losing their habits of punctuality. Many will feel, as if every thing, but religion, ought to be entirely neglected; and all study and classical instruction given up, for the purpose of attending religious meetings, and conversing exclusively on subjects connected with eternity.—It requires, therefore, great prudence and firmness, mixed with tenderness and pious solicitude in the instructors, to preserve order, and continue the stated instruction and regular exercises of the institution, without either doing or saying something calculated to divert the attention of the serious from the *great* subject; or, at least, appearing to the inexperienced students, to be indifferent to their spiritual good; and thus obstructing the progress of the blessed work. And yet, I am persuaded, that this firmness, with prudence, must be exercised, and order carefully maintained; or an awakening in college will not prove to be a genuine revival of religion—the temporary excitement will degenerate into a sickly sensibility and a sort of religious dissipation. No stated classical exercise, as experience and observation have taught me to believe, should be omitted; except, perhaps, when a season is set apart for special religious services. Nor should any student be excused from a single regular college exercise; except, perhaps, when he is evidently under powerful conviction, and so overwhelmed with a sense of sin, that he cannot control his thoughts, command his feelings, and restrain his tears. It is true, in the height of a revival, in a literary institution, there cannot—there *will* not—there *should* not be, as much time devoted to study, as at ordinary seasons. The instructors, therefore, may require shorter lessons; they may occasionally avoid calling on those to recite, whose minds they know to be most deeply impressed; they may even give a more serious cast to the recitations, and occupy, themselves, a larger portion of time than usual, in comments and explanations. All this may be judiciously done, without essential injury to order, mental discipline, or even scholarship. But, if instructors, in a time of religious excitement, would guard their pupils, and especially the younger class, against indolence and a habit of inattention to study; or would promote their highest spiritual interests even, they must hold them rigidly to the stated classical exercises of the institution.—On this subject, I add, it is important—indispensably important to a happy result, that there should be, among the officers, agreement in sentiment and harmony of action.

2. In accordance with the preceding remark, I observe further; when this prudence and this firmness, modified by tenderness of spirit and a deep solicitude for the best interests of their pupils, are harmoniously exercised by the whole faculty of a college, in times of revival, a blessing generally attends their faithful labors and united prayers; and the effects are exceedingly happy. And were college officers always thus prudent, firm, affectionate and harmonious, the principal and most plausible objection against revivals in these institutions, would be very much diminished, if not entirely removed. I say *plausible objection;* because it must be admitted, that such seasons have sometimes been the occasion of essential injury to indolent and thoughtless young men. And this abuse of religious privileges has led some serious minds to entertain prejudices against revivals, and object to the use of means and the adoption of measures, adapted to promote them. It has been said, that the general and engrossing attention, which the very notion of a revival implies, cannot exist, in literary institutions, without encroaching on the hours of study; and, of course, without depressing the standard of scholarship. Now, if it were not for the occasional perversions and abuses, through mismanagement and neglect of duty, in those who have the oversight of these institutions, this objection could hardly find a place in any serious mind. For suppose the position, involved in the objection, were still true, in some extreme cases, would the objection itself be valid; or would it then continue to be made by any, who claim to be the friends of religion?—could it be called in, as it now sometimes is, to sanction, in a system of education, a disregard to the most interesting and momentous subject, which can be presented to the human mind?—would it be pretended, that a little more abstract science, or polite literature, would

compensate for the want of the practical science of "life and immortality"—for the desecration of talents—for the loss of the soul? But, in well conducted revivals, the supposition is not true—as a general statement, it is wide from the truth. Idlers, to be sure, will be idle, whether under the cloak of religion, or in the undisguised garb of infidelity and licentiousness. Still, attention—deep and absorbing attention to spiritual and eternal things need not; and, under the direction of wise and faithful counsellors, generally does not retard the progress of intellectual improvement. With such prudent management, it redeems from indolence and vain pursuits more hours, than it demands for the service of the Redeemer, in acts of devotion. Hence, where one youth is drawn away from his studies, and retarded in his literary career, by undue attention to the subject of religion and excessive solicitude for the salvation of his soul, many—very many, in these seasons of religious inquiry and "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," are reclaimed from a course, which would have ended in dissipation, idleness and ruin. Not a few, whose powers of mind had remained latent, and who had been dragged along in their education, by the mere force of authority, seem to awake, for the first time, to the active pursuits of learning, when in these seasons of excitement, they are roused from their state of moral lethargy and spiritual stupidity. And in all cases of genuine conversion and sincere devotion to the service of God, what is lost in technical science and human learning, is compensated, and more than compensated, by what is gained in mental discipline and spiritual knowledge.

3. In accordance with the preceding remarks, I observe finally, that revivals of religion in colleges are peculiarly important and greatly to be desired, on account of their extensive influence on the cause of human happiness and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world; and on the prosperity of our country and the preservation of our republican institutions.—A revival of pure and undefiled religion, any where, is of incalculable importance; inasmuch as it directly increases the happiness of its subjects, brings many souls into the kingdom of God, and causes everlasting "joy in heaven." But this importance is greatly enhanced; when a revival finds its way into a college; because every conversion there has a two fold bearing—an *immediate* and a *remote* influence on the cause of religion and the glory of God. For every subject of such a work may be expected to exert an influence, proportionate to his means of knowledge and improvement; and he may be the happy instrument of publishing the gospel and winning souls to Christ. Besides, under such circumstances, every pious student in the institution is quickened and animated in the discharge of duty; and thus prepared for higher service in the church, at home; or more efficient labors, as a messenger of mercy to the scattered Jews or far distant Gentiles.—Cast your eye, dear Sir, upon the Triennial Catalogue of this institution, and observe how many now in the field of ministerial labor, in this and other lands; and how many, who, like Fisk and Parsons, and Warren and Frost, and Andrus and Moseley, and Larned and Brown, and Henry and Wilcox,* have finished their work and gone to their rest, were subjects of revivals here, or were eminently fitted for their "high calling," during these seasons of "refreshing from the presence of the Lord!"—I have, myself, just been looking over the Catalogue, calling up the recollection of scenes and characters, pertaining to the period of my connection with the institution; and trying to obtain some adequate idea of the extent of the blessings, connected with these precious seasons of revival. But their results are too great, and their happy consequences are too widely spread and reach too far into the future, to be seen with mortal eye, or estimated by finite calculation. The light of eternity alone can disclose all their effects, and

* Rev. Pliny Fisk and Rev. Levi Parsons were Missionaries to Palestine.
Rev. Edward Warren and Rev. Edmund Frost, Missionaries to India.
Rev. Joseph R. Andrus, Agent of American Colonization Society.
Rev. Samuel Mosely, Missionary to the American Indians.
Rev. Sylvester Larned, New Orleans.
Rev. Joseph Brown, Secretary and Chaplain of the American Seaman's Friend Society.
Rev. Thomas Carlton Henry, D. D., Charleston, S. C.
Rev. Carlos Wilcox, Hartford, Ct.

show the full extent of their blessed influence. Nor am I able, in all cases, to fix precisely the number of the converts of each particular revival, or distinguish between them and reclaimed backsliders. But I remember, with a great degree of accuracy; and can state, with great confidence, how many, of each class, went forth from the institution credible professors of religion, in connection with some evangelical church. And I find by examination, and computation, that of the 499, who have been graduated at the 22 last commencements, 331 were at the time of their graduation professors of religion; and, that 168 only made no such profession, while members of college. Of the latter number, however, 24, as I have learned, and previously intimated, have since become professors, and some of them ministers of the gospel. This statement shows, that about two-thirds of the whole number, graduated during this period of 22 years, have gone out qualified to exert a salutary influence on the happiness of the human race. I may add, as an encouraging circumstance, (owing probably to the influence of the American Education Society,) that this proportion of pious graduates has recently been considerably increased. For illustration, the four last classes; consisted the *first* of 25 members; the *second* of 22; the *third* of 43; and the *fourth* of 37, making the number of 127. Of these 98, or a little more than three-fourths of the whole, were regular members of some evangelical church.

Now, if we suppose, that one-half of the 331, who were professors at the time of their graduation, were led to espouse the cause of religion, during some of the revivals in college; (a supposition probably near the truth;) and that the other half were, by the same sanctifying influence, raised to a much higher rank in the scale of piety, active benevolence and holy enterprise; (as is without question true, concerning many of them)—if we remember likewise, (as is known with certainty,) that about 170 of them have already entered the ministry; while many others are now in a course of theological study and preparation for this "work of love;" we shall come to the conclusion, that the influence of these revivals is intimately connected with the progress of the gospel and the desired and expected conversion of the world. Of how much good must they already have been the occasion; and how much, may we not hope, they will still accomplish! O, how many, (I use the language of a father in the ministry,) how many, who were ready to perish, and would have died in heathenish darkness, will have occasion to praise God for ever, for these revivals, which furnished the instruments of their conversion and salvation! I may add, how many will still perish, "for lack of vision, if revivals in this and other colleges, in our land, should cease!"

But revivals in a college are desirable, not merely because they increase the number, and elevate the piety of thoroughly educated ministers; but because, in addition to these, they send forth many, who do not feel themselves "called to the work of the ministry," prepared to exert a salutary influence, in the various departments of social life and civil office—to labor for the good of our country—to guard our republican institutions—to become conservators of the Commonwealth. If any thing can save our country from the degeneracy and final overthrow of all preceding republics, it is sanctified learning—virtue and knowledge combined—established religious principle, united with cultivated intellect and enlarged views, in those who are called to offices of trust and authority. The times require rulers of this high intellectual and moral character;—the country needs such men for counsellors;—our free institutions cannot be preserved without such guardians. Some such we have, indeed; or our land would, long ago, have been like Sodom and Gomorrah. But more—many more such are needed, to give permanency and elevation to those institutions, with which liberty, peace and safety are inseparably connected.

For our country's sake, therefore, as well as for the sake of the church of God, we should pray, that the fountains of knowledge among us may be purified—that our seats of science may be nurseries of piety and virtue—that the Spirit of the Lord may be poured out, in copious effusions, upon all our literary institutions.

In view of the blessed effects of revivals in colleges, will not Christians

continue to pray for them, with fervency and perseverance? Will they not remember the approacbing season of Annual Concert, for this purpose; and meet together with one accord; and agree, as touching this one thing, in their supplications to God?

You, my dear Sir, who have surveyed the desolations of Zion—who have looked over the world, and seen how many "fields are white already to harvest;" and have dcvoted your time and your energies to the work of seeking out and aiding pious young men, in their preparations for the ministry; will not cease to pray, and exhort the churches to pray tbe Lord of the harvest, to pour out his Spirit upon our young men, and thus qualify and send forth laborers into his harvest; till the work shall be accomplished—till the harvest shall be gathered in—till the reapers shall return, bringing their sheaves with them—till the seventh angel shall sound, and great voices be heard in heaven, saying: *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

Your brother in the faith, and fellow laborer
unto the kingdom of heaven,

JOSHUA BATES.

ANNIVERSARIES OF SOCIETIES.

Anniversary of the Western Education Society, N. Y.

The Annual Meeting of the Western Education Society, was held at Auburn, August 21, 1839, the President, Henry Dwight, Esq. in the chair; the services were opened with prayer from Rev. Mr. Porter. The Secretary, Rev. Timothy Stilman, then read the Annual Report.

On motion of Rev. Eliakim Phelps, of the Philadelphia Education Society, it was *Resolved*, That the Report now read be adopted, and that the Secretary be requested to furnish a copy for publication.

On motion of Rev. F. C Cannon, agent of A. B. C. F. M., *Resolved*, That as Education Societies exert a controlling influence upon missinnary enterprises abroad, as well as upon Churches at home, it is of the highest importance, that they greatly increase their efforts to train up a deeply pious and thoroughly educated ministry.

On motion of Rev. George Beecher, of Rochester, seconded by Rev. Joel Parker of New York, *Resolved*, That to accomplish the great work of restoring this ruined world to God, it is of pre-eminent importance to train up a ministry who shall be fervent in piety, strong in faith, full of the Holy Ghost, and mighty in the Scriptures.

The above named resolutions were sustained with addresses by the movers of them.

Extract from the Report.

Could we have been present at Boston in July, 1815, when eight young men met together, "to take into consideration the expediency of forming themselves into an association for the purpose of raising funds to educate pious young men for the ministry," and had we then prnphesied, that in less than one quarter of a century, from this small beginning, a National Iostitution would proceed, whicb would become a principle source of reliance for a ministry for our own country, and the missionaries who shall go hence to the Heathen, we should have been pronounced dreaming enthusiasts.

Yet such the developments of Providence prove to have been the fact, in the past, for already 1400 ministers have been furnished for the world, of whom 60 have become Foreign Missionaries. They are now preaching tbe gospel statedly to ahout 420,000 hearers—have been instrumental in the hopeful conversion of about 210,000 persons, and have been the means of inducing more than 1000 young men to study for the ministry. In view of these results, together with the many incidental fruits of their ministry which might be enumerated, we cannot fail to acknowledge that ours is a noble, a glorious work.

The Western Education Society was organized in 1817, and since its connection with the National Society, has ever been an efficient auxiliary. Its results, however, cannot he definitely stated, except as comprising a part of the great whole.